



OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The Governor's Office of Homeland Security (OHS) is responsible for coordinating California's homeland security efforts. Our primary focus is preventing terrorist attacks, reducing California's vulnerability to terrorism and minimizing the loss of life or damage to critical infrastructure should a terrorist attack occur. OHS is fully committed to protecting California's residents and respecting their civil rights and civil liberties in fulfilling our duties.

While the California Office of Homeland Security is a federally recognized agency with law enforcement status, we do not conduct activities in the traditional sense of police departments or prosecutors offices. We do not have law enforcement criminal investigatory powers. We serve principally as an advisor to the governor's office and state agencies and as California's liaison to the federal agencies responsible for preventing terrorism. We coordinate information sharing and analysis with our first-responder and first-preventer partners at the federal, state, tribal, county and local levels. We also help develop statewide policy initiatives to support prevention and protection efforts. Finally, we develop strategies to mitigate homeland security risks by investing in security improvements and enhancing California's emergency response capabilities.

In partnership with the California Department of Justice and the California Highway Patrol, OHS created the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Center (STTAC) to provide state leaders and our homeland security partners with timely information and analysis about terrorism threats and potential consequences. The STTAC coordinates with the four Regional Terrorism Threat Assessment Centers (RTTACs), located in Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego and the Bay Area.

OHS and the threat assessment centers must comply with our Federal and State Constitutions, laws, regulations and policies regarding the protection of civil rights and civil liberties. Because protecting civil rights and civil liberties is so fundamentally important to our democracy and our office's mission, we established the State Terrorism Threat Assessment Advisory Group (STTAAG) to provide us advice. Elizabeth Rindskopf-Parker, Dean of the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law, chairs this advisory board. She brings to this position a wealth of experience in national security matters, as well as a demonstrated commitment to privacy protections and civil rights. Dean Parker and the other distinguished members are also working with us to promote public education and awareness about the importance of security, civil rights and tolerance in our society.

In fighting terrorism to defend our freedom and way of life, we must not destroy those very essential liberties in the process. All of us at the California Office of Homeland Security are dedicated to that proposition. We are honored and privileged to serve you in making California a better place to live, work and prosper.

Matthew R. Bettenhausen, Director